

Specialist Clinic Referral Guidelines

SANDRINGHAM ACUTE GENERAL SURGERY UNIT

If there is a concern about the delay of the appointment, or any deterioration in the patient's condition, please send an updated referral with additional information.

If the patient's care needs have become urgent, please call the unit registrar on call on 9076 2000.

To refer your patient to Specialist Outpatient Sandringham acute general surgery clinics

Please send your referral to Alfred Specialist Clinics via **ConsultMed eReferral**. To log in or create a free [Consultmed account click here.](#)

Alfred Health's preference is for all referrers to utilise eReferral; however, referrals can be sent via fax to (03) 9076 6938, or email to op.referrals@alfred.org.au whilst we transition our services to this secure platform.

Where appropriate and available, the referral may be directed to an alternative specialist clinic or service.

Please note a referral may be declined if it does not contain essential information required for triage, if the condition is not appropriate for referral to a public hospital, or is a condition not routinely seen at Alfred Health.

The clinical information provided in the referral will determine the triage category. The triage category will affect the timeframe in which the patient is offered an appointment. Waiting times to scheduled appointments vary across clinics and are impacted by factors including clinic demand, capacity and staffing. You can view waiting times to scheduled appointments for urgent and routine referrals [here](#).

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The following conditions are not routinely seen at Sandringham Specialist Consulting Clinics:

- Patients who are being treated for the same condition at another Victorian public hospital
- Surgical consultation for children under 18 years of age
- Patients who are at high anaesthetic risk
- Patients with BMI >40

Please note patients with a high anaesthetic risk may be referred to The Alfred for further management.

Sandringham Hospital offers general surgery for conditions including:

- Excision of skin and subcutaneous lesions (including lipomas, cysts, ganglia and skin cancers)
- Carpal tunnel release (please arrange nerve conduction study prior to referral)
- Hernias (including abdominal, groin and major ventral hernias)
- Gallbladder surgery
- Colorectal surgery in patients without significant comorbidities, including colectomy, stomas and stoma reversal
- Haemorrhoids, pilonidal sinus, anal fissures and anal fistulas

Please see the following referral guidelines for more referral information for these conditions.

[Breast and Endocrine Surgery \(BES\)](#)

[Colorectal Surgery \(CRS\)](#)

[Hepato Pancreaticobiliary service \(HPB\)](#)

[Oesophago-gastric and Bariatric Surgery service \(OGB\)](#)

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Referral to Victorian public hospital is not appropriate for

- Asymptomatic gallstones < 2 centimetres
- Gallbladder polyp < 7 millimetres
- Raised liver function tests without evidence of gallstones or gallbladder polyps.
- Referrals based on incidental findings found on imaging where the hernia is asymptomatic and not palpable
- Rectus diastasis as the only reason for referral.
- At low or slightly above average risk where there is no family history of breast cancer
- Moderate risk due to family history of breast cancer
- Referrals for familial cancer services should be directed to publicly funded [familial cancer centres](#).
- Referrals for genetic testing should be directed to publicly funded [genetic testing clinics](#)
- Referrals that do not meet the criteria without specific medical indication and that would be considered a cosmetic procedure would not be accepted.
- Patients who develop complications of cosmetic breast augmentation should be directed to return to the surgeon, practice or health service where the surgery was performed.
- No significant abnormality detected
- Benign or indeterminate findings on imaging.
- Single or multiple simple cysts
- Fibrocystic breasts
- Breast pain with normal imaging and clinical examination
- No significant abnormality or benign findings on biopsy or imaging or both.
- Incidental findings found on imaging without symptoms or clinical significance
- Patients with controlled symptoms.
- Rectal bleeding with a known cause where serious colorectal pathology has been excluded and the symptoms remain unchanged, are occasional, or have resolved.
- Perianal lumps without concerning features or that have resolved.
- Asymptomatic skin tags.

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Please include in your referral:

Demographic details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of birth • Patient's contact details including mobile phone number • Referring GP details • If an interpreter is required • Medicare number 	Clinical information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reason for referral • Duration of symptoms • Relevant pathology and imaging reports • Past medical history • Current medications
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Some clinics offer private consultations in public rooms. If the patient chooses to be seen as a private patient, **please provide a referral to a named specialist** to comply with MBS billing requirements. There is no out-of-pocket cost to the patient. Please note the patient may be seen by another consultant in that clinic to expedite their care.

The times to assessment may vary depending on size and staffing of the hospital department.

If you are concerned about the delay of the outpatient appointment or if there is any deterioration in the patient's condition, or if you require an urgent specialist opinion, please contact the General Surgery Registrar on call on 9076 1000.